



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For ADVANCE Release TO THE AM's
OF WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1944.

Scientists of the Fish and Wildlife Service of the Department of the Interior have outdone the best of Parisian perfumers; they have perfected a scent of genuinely fatal appeal.

The appeal, it should be pointed out, is for marauding coyotes exclusively. To human noses the new scent is almost inexpressively repugnant.

Prepared in what perfumers would call extract or highly concentrated form, the scent is made from the rancid blubber of the common hair seal of Alaska. A few drops placed near a trap has proven to be an almost irresistible lure to coyotes. When the wind is right the animals are able to detect the odor many hundreds of yards away. The response of the coyotes is almost instantaneous even though the smell is entirely unfamiliar.

The discovery of the coyote's fatal foible was made almost by accident, according to Dorr D. Green, chief of the Service's Division of predator and rodent control.

"Our field men," Mr. Green said, "noted that in Alaska the timber wolves patrolled the shorelines for dead seals and seemed to prefer the blubber of these seals to any other food. Local trappers took advantage of this weakness."

Since what pleased a wolf might well please a coyote, representatives of the Service in Alaska prepared the new extract for trial. Its success has been such the Service now finds difficulty in supplying the demand. The scent formerly used, chiefly made of rotting fish, has been almost entirely abandoned.

"In a way," said Mr. Green, "it is like employing a thief to catch a thief, because the hair seal has long been regarded by Alaska fishermen as an arch-enemy of the salmon."

Trapping of predators such as the coyote is an essential part of the work of the Fish and Wildlife Service because of the heavy toll they take among herds and flocks of domestic animals chiefly in the west. A single coyote sometimes causes damage running into thousands of dollars in the space of only a year. Service hunters take more than 100,000 coyotes a year.

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